



**MARCH 2016**

**Volume 5 Issue 3**

# VE3ERC-LUB

# HAPPY EASTER

## **IN THIS ISSUE**

**PREZ SEZ P. 2**

**MARCH MINUTES P. 3**

**VISIT ERC AT MAPLE  
SYRUP FESTIVAL P. 7**

**NEW PROJECTS P. 8**

**WEDNESDAY  
CONTOLLERS P. 9**

**OFF THE GRID SHACK  
P. 4**

**President: Rich VE3DCC**

**Vice-President: John VE3JXX**

**Secretary: Tom VE3DXQ**

**Treasurer: Reg VE3RVH**

**Trustee: Al VA3TET**

**QSL Manager: Joyce VA3WXU**

**Repeater Manager & Maintenance:  
Carl VE3FEF**

**Website Admin: Ted VE3TRQ**

**Lighthouse: Bruce VE3QB**

**Maple Syrup Display: Joyce VA3WXU**

**Judd VE3WXU**

**Newsletter: Bob VE3IXX**

## **ERC REPEATERS**

**UHF 444.700 TONE: 131.8**

**VHF 147.390 + TONE: 131.8**

**EMERGENCY SIMPLEX: 147.51**



This mag mount adds new meaning to "short and droopy" after the massive ice storm.

# THE PREZ SEZ!

This club is Radio-ACTIVE

This club is Radio-ACTIVE

## President's Update for January 2016



Our's is an interesting hobby and club. By the time most folks join, they have already made a commitment, either by obtaining their license or, better, by actually setting up their licensed station. For that reason, the major role of the club is to provide opportunity for members to learn more about their passion and provide the means for them to pursue it. In this regards, there is something for everyone and anyone to be part of.

Be "on the air". Our net is active each day. I encourage all who can, to check in and say "hi". We will also be operating ONTARS during MAPLE Syrup Festival Day. If you can participate, on site, or check into our Maple Syrup day station. Help showcase ve3ERC members in action. Be "seen".

We will be doing a short presentation to Woolwich Council on April 5, This meeting is televised via Rogers Cable and we are first on the agenda. We hope to outline our part in the official Woolwich Emergency Plan AND keep our profile alive. Please, if you can, come to the meeting, in your ve3ERC hat and shirt, to show the strength of our club.

Our colleagues in KWARC are looking for help in marshalling the St. John Ambulance Marathon on Sunday April 24. If you can, offer a few hours. Help the community.

Geoff Coulson of Environment Canada is again offering training sessions for CANWARN on Wed. May 4 at 7:00 pm, venue to be announced. Help protect citizens.

Our presence at the Central Ontario Flea Market is a staple. If you can, come out and volunteer to help out at the table, or our operating station. Be "there". Our Field Day is yet another opportunity to participate in whatever way you can.

We also have construction projects and research in areas spanning antennae to solid-state projects and software radio/Arduino. Pursue your curiosity.

**SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE! STAY ACTIVE! STAY INVOLVED!**

**Regards, Rich, ve3DCC.**

# VE3ERC Elmira Radio Club Inc.

*Minutes from March 23, 2016*

## Present:

VA3TET Al, VA3GWM Gord, VE3WXU Jud, VA3WXU Joyce, VE3DCC Rich, VA3PDC Paul, VE3IXX Bob, VE3DXQ Tom, VE3PVB Paul, VE3JXX John, VE3QB Bruce, VE3EIX Harry, VE3QB Bruce, VE3RVH Reg, VA3DXK Brian, VE3IXX Bob, VA3TET Al, VE3EIX Harry.

The VE3ERC Elmira Radio Club Inc was opened at 7:30 Pm by the Club President Rich. Rich then asked for a roll call. Present as listed above.

## Reports and Announcements:

Business arising from previous minutes: none. Dates of future meetings are on the calendar.

Announcements: NOTE: dates for 2016 are now confirmed as listed below.

NOTE: that ERC has a place on the WOOLWICH COUNCIL agenda, April 5<sup>th</sup> (televised on Rogers Cable),

Please come out and support this if you can! Wear your ERC Cap and T shirt if you have them.

NOTE SPECIAL: Our APRIL meeting will have to start at 7:30 eyeball as the fire dept. has a Sparks presentation. This means we will have access at 7:30 and NOT 6:30 IN APRIL ONLY.

Rich VE3DCC had the emergency list for ERC members and asked for those present to update it, as he will be in a meeting next Tuesday with Dale the Fire deputy chief and he would like an updated list of emergency amateur radio operators. Rich VE3DCC asked members present who are interested to update their info, and fill out a permission slip. This permission slip gives you access to the sites.

If you are already on the list there is no need to fill these out.

April 24 is the St John's Ambulance Marathon. Please contact Nick Waterman at [laptop@noseynick.com](mailto:laptop@noseynick.com) phone 519-

If you would like to get involved with the backup communications that KWARC provides. This event runs from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm approximately.

Rich VE3DCC got a letter from Jeff Coleson of Environment Canada. Jeff asked to announce at our meeting that there will be training for Can-warn on 7:00pm Wednesday May 4<sup>th</sup>. The venue is still to be determined. If you are interested please contact Rich VE3DCC.

Status of Repeaters: Bruce VE3QB advised that tomorrow he will be upgrading the other UHF Yaesu repeater he has to the new firmware. This will solve the problem of people stepping on the Identifier, the squelch tail will be gone, and the squelch tail time will be adjustable. Bruce advised once the upgrade and testing is done it can be switched to VHF and swapped with the one at the fire hall, which will then also be upgraded. Rich VE3DCC thanked Bruce VE3QB for his work on this.

Treasurer's Report: Budget for 2016 and VOTE on fee structure (secret elimination ballot)

Our options will be listed on the board; then, we will vote repeatedly via secret ballot to eliminate the bottom option and any options that have fewer than 10% of the vote (3 votes?).

I trust this will be acceptable. We will accept "options" at the meeting that MIGHT include:

Option 1: keep the fee at \$25

Option 2: raise the fee to \$36

Option 3: raise the fee to \$40

Option 4: introduce a differentiated structure of RAC \$30 and non-RAC \$50

Option 5: raise the fee to \$50

Option 6: introduce a differentiated structure of RAC \$40 and non-RAC \$50

Voting went to a third ballot and option 6 is the new Dues structure. Motioned by Reg to accept the new dues structure 2<sup>nd</sup> by John VE3JXX accepted.

There was much discussion and members would like more clarification as to what is covered under RAC insurance.

50/50 draw won by Rich VE3DCC.

Nominations Committee: Rich VE3DCC and Paul VE3PVB are drawing up a list of candidates.

The nominations will take place at our April meeting which will also be our annual general meeting. Reg VE3RVH will give the ERC Inc financial report for the year.

Incorporation and Constitution Committee: Reg VE3RVH will update us on his progress with Revenue Canada.

Elmira Maple Syrup Day: Joyce VA3WXU advised us of the preparations done so far. Brochures are done. The tri-fold presentation board is done. The QSL card is updated and old ones can be used as well by adding a sticker. The QRZ page is up now. Also the EQSL web site is available to print the QSL cards now. Judd VE3WXU and Paul VA3PDC made a squawk box which allows visitors to listen to communications without interrupting the radio operators.

Those helping set up will show up at the Lyons hall for 1:30 pm on Friday April 1<sup>st</sup>. Joyce VA3WXU mention items that those helping out will bring. Showing up to help will be Al, Paul, Jim, Tom, Judd and Joyce and others later on. There will be radios in operation by 7 Pm.

Some items being brought are cables, extension cords, power bars, insulation, masking tape, easels, displays, radios, ladder, computer and radio for PSK. We need table cloth for hiding equipment under the table.

Rich VE3DCC did the presentation on Amateur Radio he will present to Woolwich council on April 5, 2016. The presentation was 10 minutes long.

The presentation is as follows:

### **Working Draft: Woolwich Presentation**

-AV incl. doc display copy of emergency plan with parts related to ert

-John Scherringa – GO box and 1 min demo

-Judd- handheld foreign contact

Handout: brochure, QSL cards

[SLIDE 1—Brochure] ve3ERC brochure

My name is Richard Clausi, International CALL SIGN, ve3DCC .I am here as President of ve3ERC, the Elmira Radio Club Inc. , a not for profit corporation, that supports the Amateur “Ham” Radio hobby within Woolwich. We are part of a larger following that includes hams in Kitchener, Guelph, Fergus, Waterloo and beyond..... The club is also formally affiliated with RAC, Radio Amateurs of Canada, our national organization. ...You have a brochure as well as a QSL contact confirm card advertising the Maple Syrup Festival distributed globally ...however, Chief Kieran Kelly likes to refer to us as the “hamsters”... and ,so...we

**Thank You for this opportunity. Although, the Elmira Amateur Ham Radio Club has been around since the 1960’s, this is the first time we have briefed council on the nature of the club. Our members felt that it would be valuable to inform you of what we do and can do in times of crisis esp. with World Radio day coming on April 18<sup>th</sup>.**

The hobby attracts many people who have high levels of skill in radio communica-

tions, and, as far back as the world wars, the contributions and value have been recognized by federal governments the world over. As a result, hams are given access to radio spectrum that is very expensive and valuable—you may recall, the price tags associated with the recent auction of radio spectrum by the Canadian government. This access provides for experimentation and development of equipment... Hams build and work satellites--there are several in orbit--do moon bounce, build antennae, design equipment ... refine digital modes.... This screen display is the Canadian band plan... it will vary with country.. and allows global communication... colours show frequency bands and modes.. Code, fm, satellite, digital

[SLIDE 2—spectrum allocations] up on screen...

Because of the exams and licensing procedure, Ham operators are quite different from Citizen Band licensees. Hams typically affiliate with service organizations such as the fire service, the Red Cross or St. John ambulance as opposed to say REACT which works in conjunction with the Police service. Elmira hams are pleased with the warm support and encouragement from the EFD. Our plan keeps our members out of your way and esp. out of harm's way; that is, away from the front lines of a disaster.

We, in fact, assume that government services communications equipment WILL NOT fail. This means that the role of the Amateur Radio community can focus on the traditional function of providing Health and Safety communications with the intent of reducing the load on cell phone towers, the telephone system and the official response services radio pool. For example, If residents are evacuated to a safe location, perhaps on short notice, ham radio operators will be able to provide communications so evacuees can inform family elsewhere of their locations and safety status;

. specifically, if a little old lady is evacuated at 2 in the morning, and she would like to make sure that her son in British Columbia knows that she is safe, we can do it.

Messages are intended to be of public service only... that is, personal, short, factual and informative with the sole intent of relieving stress and confusion among those directly affected by the disaster evacuation. Federal regulations require the licensed operators to be in direct care and control of equipment licensed to them; hence, the operators must physically be with their equipment at all times, and obviously in a state of READINESS

The local club engages in daily radio nets each morning where check-ins from anywhere in the world are taken..

We support two radio repeater networks, with 2 backup repeaters, with the ability to link world wide. The capability is checked daily via nets that operate at 8:15 each morning, and on Wed. evenings. We also participate in international field day exercises designed to test the robustness of our systems physically in the field running emergency power over a non-stop 24 hour period, making contacts like this...

[ ve3WXU JUDD demo]  
[ ve3JXX JOHN demo – GO box ]

A catastrophe means that all bets are off, so in a worse case scenario, the ad hoc nature of what we do.... That is, the ability to hang a piece of spaghetti and be “on the

air” .. is often a final solution to a communications nightmare. We and you sincerely hope that our services are never necessary, but it is important that you are aware of this option. You never know what a HAM will pull out of his trunk...

VE3ERC is a documented part of the Township of Woolwich Emergency Plan as specified in section 4.6 and 16.9 of The Plan.

=====

You have ALREADY received a report IN 2011 and ,AGAIN, 2015 outlining areas for improvement, as discovered during our exercises. Concerns are mainly in the antenna and transmission categories. This room for example, has metal in the windows, forming a faraday shield that makes use of radios in this room, difficult... an external antenna would help...

We also mention that storage space in the firehall – perhaps a space in your planned new fire hall as is done in Norfolk County..and antenna locations at the hall and ,perhaps, on the water tower would be beneficial in ensuring that communications are reliable and ABLE TO FULFILL the ITEMS LISTED IN....

[ SLIDE 3—Woolwich Emergency Plan]

Your current official plan iwhich ncludes the following notations:

#### 4.6 Amateur Radio (HAM Operators)

**The EOC coordinator may request Amateur Radio to provide back-up communications at key locations.** Police, Fire, Ambulance and Public Works are responsible for their radio systems. **Should the phone and/or radio systems become inoperable, the Radio Group may be requested** to report to the operating EOC and or the Duty Officer/ Communications Manager and await further instructions regarding the emergency response

#### 16.9 Elmira Amateur Radio Club

The role and responsibilities of the Elmira Amateur Radio club during an emergency are as follows:

- To provide volunteers and mobile radio equipment to enable a radio communication net** to be established between the reception/evacuation centres, the Message Centre (located with the Social Services Support Group), the Red Cross Headquarters, and other locations as required (ie Public Health and Treasury Services).
- To ensure that **radio club volunteers report to designated sites** at the direction of the Duty Officer/Communications Manager.
- To provide direction to the Duty Officer/Communications Manager regarding communication equipment requirements/needs, ability to transmit data and other areas of concern regarding the communication net.
- To maintain a list of volunteers and contact numbers.
- To **ensure that radio club volunteers are registered using the Township of Woolwich Volunteer Registration Form (Appendix 7)** and that such forms are forwarded to the Duty Officer/Communications Manager who is responsible to forward these forms to the Director of Recreation and Facilities Services.



-----  
Our goal is to provide immediate assurance of family status in the after-math of a disaster so victims of a tragedy are not subjected to more stress and unhappiness.

The essence of this plan is to establish a radio link to a non-local site that is unaffected by the local disaster so messages can be handled using uncorrupted services ( electricity, internet etc. ) to service mobiles/portables at evacuation centres at the bulls-eye of the disaster.

We hope we can count on your continue warm support.

Meeting Closed at 8:50 Pm.

Dates for ERC meetings 2016:

Jan 27, 2016 - DMR digital voice capable portable radio (15 min) Gregory Smith.

FEB 24, 2016 - SDR Radio update (Terry VE3XTM)

Mar 23, 2016 - Digital Modes PSK (Dennis VE3UTN). Also Maple syrup preps.

April 27, 2016 – Late start 7:30

May 25, 2016 – elections and LED presentation by Frank VA3FJM

June 22, 2016 - Financial reports and CRA return. Field day also in June.

July and August - no meetings.

September 28, 2016

Oct 26, 2016

Nov 23, 2016

Dec 14, Christmas party

**JOIN US**

**AT THE ELMIRA MAPLE SYRUP FESTIVAL**

**APRIL 2, 2016**

**FOR A REALLY SWEET TIME**

## Winter is done. Are your projects?

### By Joyce Hodge VA3WXU

There has been a whirlwind of activity in our house in preparation for the Maple Syrup Festival. One thing that was accomplished was Judd (VE3WXU) actually starting and finishing a project in just two days. This project was originally a thought that Paul (VA3PDC) had. His idea was that we needed to construct a squawk box that would allow visitors at the festival to listen independently from the logger, and would be able to hear what is being said on the HF radio via headphones. Judd remembered seeing a similar project on the KWARC website that referred to an article from the June 1998 TCA.

Essentially, Judd came up with his simple version of a field day squawk box. His finished project will allow for independent control over headphone volume with no effect on the radio operator's own volume settings. To expedite project construction and completion, a realistic speaker and enclosure was chosen from his "stash" under the stairwell. This was a prime candidate to be used because it would minimize the cost of the project. Two trim pots and knobs from a lightning struck Tigertronics Signal Link USB and two quarter inch female audio plugs from an old PA Amp were used for the modification. A few holes drilled and the components installed and wired in the speaker's enclosure's back cover and VOILA! In just ten minutes of assembly, he had created a usable project for special events and field day activities which is also easily stored and usable in our shack.



His success in finishing this project has driven him on to also complete a 3 month old shelved project. This project was a retrofit of an Astatic D-104 by upgrading to a Meme's 401 mic element. I think from here, he will move on to finishing the numerous versions of USB sound interfaces he has on the go.

Or maybe not. I could be wrong because something is brewing in the shack. I keep hearing about buzzards that have landed and him discussing the words moon bounce and light house with his brother and friends here and down south. And recently, I have noticed a lot of theoretical papers coming out of the printer.

Should I be worried or inspired? Only universal time will tell.





## **WEDNESDAY NITE NET CONTROLLERS**

**MARCH 30 - BILL VE3ETK**

**APRIL 6 - REG VE3RVH**

**APRIL 13 - PAUL VE3PVB**

**APRIL 20 - BOB VE3IXX**

**APRIL 27 - M E E T I N G**

**MAY 4 - JUDD VE3WXU**

**MAY 11 - TED VE3TRQ**

**MAY 18 - AL VA3TET**

**MAY 25 - M E E T I N G**

**JUNE 1 - BILL VE33TK**

**VISIT THE ERC WEBSITE AT**

**[www.ve3erc.ca](http://www.ve3erc.ca)**

# AN OFF THE GRID SHACK

By Bob Koechl VE3IXX

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the Guelph Amateur Radio Club for allowing me to use their emergency trailer while it is parked at our farm. I have set up a second ham shack in the trailer with a view of being able to dismantle all my equipment at a moment's notice if the Guelph club were to need it for an actual emergency.

Because of the out-of-the-way location of the trailer I have to run a long extension cord right in the parking area. While I have done this, it is somewhat awkward. So, with this in mind as

well as making the station immune to any power outages

(we do get them once in while here in the country), I decided to make the

shack self sufficient. A heavy duty tractor battery which I had, powers the rig. Using a solar panel which I've also had for many years, I keep the battery charged up. For lighting in the evening, which I require quite frequently, I used a spare auto bulb and an electrical switch (all which I had in my junk-box). It doesn't look like much (I like to call it rustic), but it works. And it didn't cost me a penny (oops! We don't have those anymore!).

For those who might be curious, I have never had my battery go below 11.8 volts after operating for over two hours.

Take that Ontario Hydro!!

